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Serial No. 10/721,512

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REMARKS

STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

Claims 14-24 are pending in the application.

Pending claims are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yoshida et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,130,757) in view of Iwai (US Patent No. 6,646,755).

According to the forgoing, the claims are amended, and, thus, the pending claims remain for reconsideration, which is respectfully requested.

No new matter has been added.

35 USC 103 REJECTION

Pending claims are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yoshida et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,130,757) in view of Iwai (US Patent No. 6,646,755). Iwai is newly cited, and, thus, newly relied upon. According to the foregoing, the claims are amended for clarity.

The Office Action page 3, in rejecting independent claims 14, 21-22, and 24, alleges Yoshida FIG. 4, CPUs 101-106 and column 14, line 16 to column 18, line 27 meet the claimed "*a plurality of request processing units* in communicationthat communicate with any of the plurality of functions, and cause one of the plurality of functions to perform the document processing according to a function requestfunctions and processing function requests received from at least one of the multifunction machines to execute the functions; and *an assigning unit* that assigns one of the request processing units to a multifunction machine based on a connection request for the function request from the multifunction machine, and sends a completion-of-assignment notification to the multifunction machine indicating that processing of athe function request is possible, wherein the request processing unit controls executing the function according to a function command received from the assigned multifunction machine."

However, Yoshida FIG. 4 and column 7, lines 1-11 discuss that CPUs 101-106 implement the functions of the Yoshida FIG. 2 copy machine 1. Accordingly, Yoshida's CPUs 101-106 might correspond to the claimed embodiment "*a plurality of functions [FIG. 2, e.g., 44-47] that perform processing to a document*" of the server 40, however, the claimed embodiment also provides "*a plurality of request processing units [FIG. 2, 42]* in communicationthat

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communicate with _any of_ the _plurality of functions, [FIG. 2, 44-47] and cause one of the plurality of functions [FIG. 2, 44-47] to perform the document processing according to a function request._" Thus, Yoshida does not disclose or suggest any "_request processing unit [FIG. 2, 42]_" that is in communication with any of Yoshida's CPU 101-106 as a copy machine 1 function. In other words, in contrast to Yoshida FIG. 4 and description thereof, the claimed embodiment provides "_a plurality of request processing units [FIG. 2, 42]_ in ~~communication~~that communicate with _any of_ the plurality of functions _[FIG. 2, 44-47]. and cause_ one of the plurality of functions _[FIG. 2, 44-47]_ to perform the document processing according to a function request_," and the present Application, for example, FIG. 2 (child procession sections 42 in communication with any one of the functions 44-47) support the claim amendments.

Further, Yoshida FIG. 4 and description thereof in column 7+ and column 14+ (relied upon by the Office Action) is silent on the claimed "_an assigning unit [FIG. 2, 41]_ that assigns one of the request processing units [42] to a multifunction machine [10] based on a connection request _for the function request_ from the multifunction machine [10], and sends a completion-of-assignment notification to the multifunction machine [10] indicating that processing of a_the_ function request is possible," because Yoshida only discusses the CPUs 101-106 as the copy machine 1 functions and the CPU 101 as the operation panel communicates with the other CPU 102-106 functions (column 7, lines 1-11; column 14, lines 55-65). However, Yoshida's CPU 101 does not provide the claimed embodiment "_an assigning unit_ [FIG. 2, 41] that assigns _one of the request processing units [42] to a multifunction machine [10] based on a connection request for the function request_ ...," because Yoshida fails to disclose or suggest the claimed "_a plurality of request processing units [FIG. 2, 42]_ ~~in communication~~_that communicate_ with _any of_ the _plurality of functions, [FIG. 2, 44-47] and cause one of the plurality of functions [FIG. 2, 44-47] to perform the document processing according to a function request._" In other words, Yoshida FIG. 4 and description thereof is silent on anything controlling the CPUs 102-106 functions such that Yoshida silent on the claimed "_a plurality of request processing units [FIG. 2, 42]_ ~~in communication~~_that communicate_ with _any of_ the _plurality of functions._" Yoshida only discusses the operation panel CPU 101 to communicate with the CPUs 102-106 as the functions, which differs from the claimed embodiment by failing to disclose or suggest "_an assigning unit_ [FIG. 2, 41] that assigns _one of the request processing units_

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[42] to a multifunction machine [10] based on a connection request for the function request."

Also, the Examiner newly relies upon Iwai to meet the claimed "an assignment canceling unit that cancels the assignment of the one request processing unit to the multifunction machine, when ~~the~~a command of the requested function is not received from the assigned multifunction machine within a predetermined amount of time." The Office Action relies on Iwai claim 23, which discusses "the inhibition of said automatic printing is cancelled when a predetermined time has lapsed from the time at which setting is made by said first setting means or said second setting means." However, Iwai claim 23 only relates to canceling an automatic print stop, so that automatic printing is enabled. Clearly Iwai fails to disclose, or suggest (or provide motivation) to one skilled in the art, to be combined with Yoshida or modified, to provide the claimed embodiment "an assignment canceling unit that *cancels the assignment of the one request processing unit [42] to the multifunction machine [10]*, when ~~the~~a *command of the requested function is not received* from the assigned multifunction machine [10] within a predetermined amount of time," because Iwai is silent on any assigning a particular "*the one request processing unit [42]*" and to cancel such assignment if a "command of the requested function is not received ... within a predetermined amount of time," providing a benefit of releasing the assigned "*the one request processing unit [42]*" for another possible multifunction machine 10 assignment.

A prima facie case of obviousness cannot be established based upon Yoshida and Iwai, because Yoshida and Iwai fail to disclose, or suggest to one skilled in the art, either expressly or implicitly based upon general knowledge of one skilled in the art, the claimed embodiment "a *plurality of functions [FIG. 2, e.g., 44-47] that perform processing to a document*" of the server 40, and "a *plurality of request processing units [FIG. 2, 42]* ~~in communication~~that *communicate* with *any of the plurality of functions, [FIG. 2, 44-47] and cause one of the plurality of functions [FIG. 2, 44-47] to perform the document processing according to a function request*," and "*an assigning unit [FIG. 2, 41]* that assigns one of the request processing units [42] to a multifunction machine [10] based on a connection request for the function request."

In view of the claim amendments and remarks, it is believed the claims are now in condition for allowance over the relied upon references, and withdrawal of the rejection of

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pending claims and allowance of pending claims is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

Respectfully submitted,
STAAS & HALSEY LLP

Date: __February 2, 2007__   By: _____

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